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## *Senate* **Clean Air Planning Act**

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, today along with Senators LINCOLN CHAFEE and JUDD GREGG, I am introducing comprehensive legislation to reduce harmful emissions from our Nation's power plants. Developed after extensive input from electric generators who would be affected by such legislation, leaders in the environmental community, and State and local regulators who will enforce any new requirements, the Clean Air Planning Act is a balanced approach to a difficult challenge.

The Clean Air Planning Act takes a market-based approach that would aggressively reduce electric power generators' emissions of sulfur dioxide, SO<sub>2</sub>, by 80 percent, nitrogen oxides, NO<sub>x</sub>, by 69 percent, mercury by 80 percent, and return carbon dioxide, CO<sub>2</sub>, emissions to 2001 levels within a decade. It provides planning and regulatory certainty to electric generators who would be required to achieve these regulations.

The negative public health and environmental impacts of SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub> and mercury emissions have been

well documented. While there is bipartisan agreement that emissions of these three pollutants from power plants need further control, there is disagreement over how much and how fast. The bill includes a flexible trading system that allows for attainment of the caps in the most efficient manner and updates the new source review program to help encourage emission reductions to occur.

There is also a growing consensus that greenhouse gases such as CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from power plants are contributing to climate change. The time has come to set up mechanisms that will address these emissions without impeding economic growth. The Clean Air Planning Act establishes modest goal of capping CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from electrical generators at 2001 levels by 2013. Generators could meet that goal with a flexible system that allows both trading between generators and earning credits through off-system reductions of greenhouse gases.

Today, America's power plants will emit over 6 million tons of harmful emissions. They will also power the world's most productive

economy. Reducing emissions while retaining affordable electricity is the goal of the Clean Air Planning Act, and I urge others to join in this effort.

In the months ahead, this clean air bill and others will be compared and debated. Opponents and supporters will be heard, but at the outset I believe we should agree on a set of guiding principles.

Four is better than three: A comprehensive four-emission strategy that includes carbon reductions provides regulatory certainty and offers the greatest environmental and economic benefits.

Markets work: Cap and trade based emission standards provide the maximum incentive to achieve cleaner power.

Stairs are better than cliffs: Prompt but gradual reductions through multi-phase or declining caps are more desirable than single phased cuts.

Eliminate redundancy: Existing regulatory programs will need some modernization in light of tight emission caps.

Clean air is a basic right all Americans deserve. The responsibility to ensure that right falls to Congress and the President. By putting our differences aside and focusing on the challenge at hand the result will be healthy citizens breathing clean air, a vibrant economy with abundant affordable

electricity, and a model for the rest of the world to follow.